



## Trump picks Sen. JD Vance of Ohio, a once-fierce critic turned loyal ally, as his GOP running mate

By JILL COLVIN, JULIE CARR SMYTH, STEVE PEOPLES and ZEKE MILLER

Associated Press

**MILWAUKEE (AP)** — Former President Donald Trump chose Sen. JD Vance of Ohio as his running mate on Monday, picking a one-time critic who became a loyal ally and is now the first millennial to join a major-party ticket at a time of deep concern about the advanced age of America's political leaders.

"After lengthy deliberation and thought, and considering the tremendous talents of many others, I have decided that the person best suited to assume the position of Vice President of the United States is Senator J.D. Vance of the Great State of Ohio," Trump said in a post on his Truth Social network as the Republican National Convention got underway in Milwaukee.



Sen. J.D. Vance, R-Ohio, attends a campaign rally, March 16, 2024, in Vandalia, Ohio.

Associated Press

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# Trump picks Sen. JD Vance of Ohio, a once-fierce critic turned loyal ally, as his GOP running mate

Continued from Front

Hours later, Vance formally received his party's formal nomination after walking onto the floor of the convention to Merle Haggard's "American First."

The 39-year-old Vance rose to national fame with the 2016 publication of his memoir, "Hillbilly Elegy." He was elected to the Senate in 2022 and has become one of the staunchest champions of the former president's "Make America Great Again" agenda, particularly on trade, foreign policy and immigration.

But he is largely untested in national politics and is joining the Trump ticket at an extraordinary moment in American history. An attempted assassination of Trump at a rally Saturday has shaken the campaign, bringing new attention to the nation's coarse political rhetoric and reinforcing the importance of those who are one heartbeat away from the presidency. Vance himself faced criticism in the wake of the shooting for a post on X that suggested President Joe Biden was to blame for the violence.

"The central premise of the Biden campaign is that President Donald Trump is an authoritarian fascist who must be stopped at all costs," Vance wrote. "That rhetoric led directly to President Trump's attempted assassination."

Law enforcement has not yet specified a motivation for the shooting.

## Why Vance was chosen over the other finalists

The pick is sure to energize Trump's loyal base. Vance has become a fixture on the conservative media circuit and frequently spars with reporters on Capitol Hill, helping establish him as the kind of leader who could carry Trump's mantle into the future, beginning with the next presidential election in 2028.

But the pick also means that two white men will now lead the Republican ticket at a time when Trump has



Sen. J.D. Vance, R-Ohio, right, points toward Republican presidential candidate former President Donald Trump at a campaign rally, March 16, 2024, in Vandalia, Ohio.

Associated Press

sought to make inroads with Black and Latino voters.

In his post announcing his pick, Trump said Vance "will be strongly focused on the people he fought so brilliantly for, the American Workers and Farmers in Pennsylvania, Michigan, Wisconsin, Ohio, Minnesota, and far beyond." Several of those Midwestern states are expected to play a critical role in November's election.

But Vance also had another advantage: his chemistry with Trump. Personal relationships are extremely important to the former president and he and Vance have developed a strong rapport, speaking on the phone regularly.

Trump has also complimented Vance's looks, saying he reminded him of "a young Abraham Lincoln." Trump and Vance spoke about 20 minutes before the Truth Social post and Trump formally offered him the job, according to a person familiar with the call who requested anonymity to share the private conversation.

Trump had long said he wanted to dramatically reveal his pick onstage at the convention, which he said would make it more "interesting" and "exciting." The timing is later than in recent cycles, but hardly unprecedented. In 1980, Ronald Reagan made his decision less than 24 hours before he formally accepted

the GOP nomination, and George H.W. Bush waited until his convention in 1988. Biden's reelection campaign issued a statement calling out Vance for saying, had he been vice president, he would have allowed "multiple slates of electors" to challenge Biden's victory over Trump four years ago. Trump repeatedly promoted falsehoods about election fraud before and after Jan. 6, 2021, when rioters loyal to the former president stormed the Capitol to try to stop the certification of his loss.

"Donald Trump picked J.D. Vance as his running mate because Vance will do what Mike Pence wouldn't on January 6: bend over backwards to enable Trump and his extreme MAGA agenda, even if it means breaking the law and no matter the harm to the American people," Biden campaign chair Jen O'Malley Dillon said in the statement.

Florida Sen. Marco Rubio and North Dakota Gov. Doug Burgum, the other contenders on Trump's shortlist, had been informed earlier Monday afternoon that they were not his pick, according to people familiar with their conversations. Trump had spent months testing the field, assessing how his contenders performed on television, at fundraisers and on rally stages. Several, including Burgum and Vance, joined

him at his criminal hush money trial in New York. Others were there at the debate last month, where Biden's disastrous performance upended his campaign, leading to widespread calls for him to step aside in favor of a younger candidate.

In "Hillbilly Elegy," Vance detailed life in Appalachian communities that drifted from a Democratic Party many residents found disconnected from their daily travails. While the book was a bestseller, it was also criticized for sometimes oversimplifying rural life and ignoring the role of racism in modern politics.

## Vance once was a harsh Trump critic

The relationship between Vance and Trump has been symbiotic.

Vance's fame grew in tandem with Trump's unlikely rise from a reality television star to Republican presidential nominee and eventually president. During the early stages of Trump's political career, Vance cast him as "a total fraud," "a moral disaster" and "America's Hitler."

But like many Republicans who sought relevance in the Trump era, Vance eventually shifted his tone. He said he was proved wrong by Trump's performance in office and evolved into one of his most steadfast defenders.

"I didn't think he was going to be a good president," Vance recently told Fox News Channel. "He was a great president. And it's one of the reasons why I'm working so hard to make sure he gets a second term."

Vance was rewarded for his turnaround during his bid for an open Senate seat in 2022, during which he landed Trump's coveted endorsement and rode it to victory in a crowded Republican primary and a general election hard fought by Democrats. He is close to Trump's son Donald Jr.

"Listen, I've seen him on TV," Donald Trump Jr. said

of Vance, speaking to CNN from the convention floor. "I've seen him prosecute the case against the Democrats. No one's more articulate than that. And I think his story, his background, really helps us in a lot of the places that you're going to need from the Electoral College standpoint."

Vance is now a Trump loyalist who has challenged the legitimacy of criminal prosecutions and civil verdicts against him and questions the results of the 2020 election.

He told ABC News in February that, if he had been vice president on Jan. 6, 2021, he would have told states where Trump disputed Biden wins "that we needed to have multiple slates of electors, and I think the U.S. Congress should have fought over it from there."

"That is the legitimate way to deal with an election that a lot of folks, including me, think had a lot of problems in 2020," he said.

Many states adopted emergency measures four years ago to allow people to vote safely during the COVID-19 pandemic. But judges, election officials in both parties and Trump's own attorney general have concluded there was no evidence of widespread voter fraud in the 2020 election.

## Vance's book vaulted him to national prominence

Vance's book — subtitled "A Memoir of a Family and Culture in Crisis" — was embraced for its insights into Trump's appeal in middle America, where manufacturing job losses and the opioid crisis had driven any families like his into poverty, abuse and addiction.

The tale of Vance's hard-scrabble childhood in Middletown, Ohio, where he was born, and his familial eastern Kentucky hills region also captivated Hollywood. Ron Howard made it into a 2020 movie starring Amy Adams as Vance's mother and Glenn Close as his beloved "Mamaw." □

## Biden to call for 5% cap on annual rent increases, as he tries to show plans to tame inflation

By JOSH BOAK  
Associated Press

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — President Joe Biden is ready to propose a 5% cap on annual rent increases for tenants of major landlords as he tries to show he's doing something about the high cost of housing, according to a person familiar with the plan.

The proposal, to be announced while the president visits Nevada on Tuesday, is being championed by Biden in the middle of a tense presidential campaign and a time when housing costs have been a major driver of overall inflation.

But the plan would require solid Democratic control of Congress to become law. Additionally, most policymakers have said the best way to limit housing costs would be through more construction and changes to land use regulations. The person familiar with the plan spoke on the condition of anonymity because the proposal has not yet been formally announced.



President Joe Biden speaks from the Roosevelt Room of the White House in Washington, Sunday, July 14, 2024, about the apparent assassination attempt of former President Donald Trump at a campaign rally in Pennsylvania.

Biden himself previewed the announcement at his NATO news conference Thursday, folding it into comments that blamed inflation on companies trying to maximize their profits in the aftermath of the pandemic.

"It's time things get back in order a little bit," Biden said. "If I'm reelected, we're go-

ing to make sure that rents are kept at 5% increase." The Washington Post first reported Monday the details of the plan, which would only apply to landlords who own 50 or more units. The price cap would not apply to units that have yet to be built.

White House officials declined to comment.

Associated Press

The median national rent was \$1,411 a month in June, up from roughly \$1,150 in early 2021 when Biden became president, according to Apartment List. Asking prices for rentals jumped in the aftermath of the pandemic and have since cooled, but the Harvard University Joint Center for Housing Studies found in

its most recent report that half of renters were "cost burdened" because they spend more than 30% of their income on housing and utilities.

In recent months, housing has been a primary contributor to keeping the consumer price index elevated at 3% annually. Inflation has been a fundamental obstacle for Biden politically as he competes against Donald Trump, the former president and Republican nominee.

The president has proposed policies designed to increase home construction, but industry representatives were quick to criticize the rent cap as ineffective for addressing the overall shortage and possibly leading to fewer habitable units than the country would otherwise have.

"This is not going to create a single unit of housing which is what is needed to create more housing opportunities for Americans," said Sharon Wilson Géno, CEO of the National Multifamily Housing Council. □

## Biden orders Secret Service to protect RFK Jr. after attempt on Trump's life

By ZEKE MILLER and COLLEEN LONG  
Associated Press

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — President Joe Biden has directed the U.S. Secret Service to protect independent presidential candidate Robert F. Kennedy Jr., after the attempted assassination of Donald Trump, the Homeland Security secretary said Monday.

Kennedy is a longshot to win Electoral College votes, much less the presidency. But his campaign events have drawn large crowds of supporters and people interested in his message. Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas said Biden had directed the protection for Kennedy "both prior to and after the events of this past weekend."

The Secret Service is legally required to protect major party presidential and vice presidential candidates and their families 120 days out from a general election, but third-party candidates are on an as-needed basis.

The Department of Homeland Security acknowledged in its 2024 budget overview that recent requests for candidate protection were coming in earlier than in the past.

Threats to political candidates are common, but law enforcement officials have said that there has been an uptick in violent rhetoric since the weekend attack at the Trump rally. Mayorkas said both Biden and Trump are "constantly the subject of threats."

"We are in a heightened

and very dynamic threat environment," he said.

With a famous name and a loyal base, Kennedy has the potential to do better than any third-party presidential candidate since Ross Perot in the 1990s. But he didn't participate in the first presidential debate on June 27. Both the Biden and Trump campaigns, who fear he could be a spoiler, bypassed the nonpartisan debate commission and agreed to a schedule that essentially left out Kennedy. Kennedy, who last year challenged Biden for the Democratic nomination before launching an independent bid, has argued that his relatively strong showing in a few national polls gives his candidacy heft. Polls during the 2016 presidential campaign reg-

ularly put libertarian Gary Johnson's support in the high single or low double digits, but he ultimately received only about 3% of the vote nationwide. Trump became the official Republican presidential

nominee on Monday after receiving the votes of enough delegates at the Republican National Convention. He was not seriously injured in the shooting over the weekend in Pennsylvania. □



Independent presidential candidate Robert F. Kennedy Jr. delivers a keynote speech at the FreedomFest Vegas event Friday, July 12, 2024, in Las Vegas.

Associated Press



# Cape Cod's fishhook topography makes it a global hotspot for mass strandings by dolphins

By **STEVE LeBLANC**  
Associated Press

The recent stranding of more than 100 dolphins on Cape Cod, the largest such event involving dolphins in U.S. history, is partly due to the peninsula's geography, with its gently sloping sand flats, tidal fluctuations and proximity to productive feeding grounds, experts said.

The elements, along with the hook-like shape of the cape itself, make Cape Cod a global hotspot for dolphin mass strandings.

Rescuers who helped free more than a hundred dolphins from the shoreline last month said Friday that they confirmed the mass stranding that began June 28 was the largest in the U.S.

A final review of data and aerial imagery last week revealed that 146 dolphins were involved in the stranding, according to the International Fund for Animal Welfare. The group estimated that 102 dolphins survived the multiday event. There were 37 natural deaths and seven dolphins had to be euthanized.

Brian Sharp, director of marine mammal rescue for the group, said dolphins strand more frequently along Cape Cod than along any other shoreline in the U.S.

The group looked at na-



This photo provided by the International Fund for Animal Welfare shows two stranded dolphins in Wellfleet, Mass., on Cape Cod, Friday, June 28, 2024.

tional data on dolphin strandings over 10 years and found that 25% of dolphins stranded in the U.S. became stuck on Cape Cod, most along a 16-mile stretch of coastline there. In 2012, the group responded to 32 mass strandings on the cape.

"We're not seeing any underlying diseases or injuries," Sharp said.

The cape poses several challenges for dolphins including gently sloping beaches, beaches with fine sand, mud flats, and

high and low tides that fluctuate by 9 to 12 feet. Dolphins swimming too close to shore at high tide can find themselves beached as the tide races out.

Those challenges can also make it harder for dolphins to rely on echolocation, he said.

While strandings typically happen from December through April, rescuers are seeing more mass strandings in the summer, according to Sharp, who said the group is trying to determine if climate change is a fac-

tor. He said fishermen have also reported seeing more bait fish that dolphins feed on moving closer to shore. It's not just dolphins that become trapped in the fishhook topography of Cape Cod.

Sea turtles can also find their way into the cape during warmer months and then become trapped when the seasons turn and they try to head south for warmer waters.

"They're not looking at a map," said Adam Kennedy, Director of the New

England Aquarium's Rescue and Rehabilitation Program. "They're used to just open water."

The turtles can become stunned by the cold water and float to the surface where they can be collected and brought in to be treated for dehydration and poor nutrition before ultimately being returned to warmer waters, Kennedy said. It can take weeks to months before a turtle can be released.

The number of rescued turtles is on the rise with an average of about 400 turtles a year being brought into the facility for help. One new factor is the warming of waters in the Gulf of Maine which can allow turtles to remain longer and get caught in the cape, Kennedy added.

Response efforts by rescuers have continued on a smaller scale including the rescue, relocation, and release of nine of the same Atlantic white-sided dolphins on July 2.

On that day, 11 dolphins were found stranded near Powers Landing in Wellfleet, Massachusetts. Two were euthanized, and nine were transported in a custom-built mobile dolphin rescue clinic vehicle. Satellite tags tracked several of these animals safely offshore. □

Associated Press

# U.S. journalist Masha Gessen is convicted in absentia in Russia for criticizing the military



Masha Gessen attends the 68th National Book Awards Ceremony and Benefit Dinner at Cipriani Wall Street on Nov. 15, 2017, in New York.

Associated Press

By The Associated Press

U.S. journalist and author Masha Gessen was convicted in absentia Monday by a Moscow court on charges of spreading false information about the military and was sentenced to eight years in prison.

The Moscow-born Gessen, a staff writer for The New Yorker and a columnist for The New York Times who lives in the U.S., is a prominent critic of Russian President Vladimir Putin and an award-winning writer.

Russian police put Gessen on a wanted list in December, and Russian media reported the case was based on statements they made about atrocities in the Ukrainian town of Bucha in an interview with a popular Russian online blogger.

In the interview, which has been viewed more than 6.5 million times on YouTube since September 2022, Gessen and blogger Yury Dud discussed atrocities in the Ukrainian town of Bucha earlier that year.

Ukrainian troops who retook Bucha from retreating Russian forces found at least 400 bodies of men, women and children on the streets, in homes, and in mass graves, with some showing signs of torture. Russian officials have vehemently denied their forces were responsible and have prosecuted a number of Russian public figures for speaking out about Bucha. □



# T-shirts with image of Trump raising his fist after assassination attempt are for sale in China

By HUIZHONG WU

Associated Press

**BANGKOK (AP)** — Images of the moment have already been splashed across the world's front pages and papered many corners of the internet — former President Donald Trump, ear bleeding, with his right hand clenched in a fist above the Secret Service agents surrounding him after he was shot.

And now they're available on T-shirts for as little as \$4 on China's e-commerce platforms.

Over the weekend, Chinese retailers leapt into action on Taobao and JD.com, the country's two biggest e-commerce platforms, to profit from the images after an assassination attempt on Trump at a rally on Saturday.

"Make America Great Again," read one T-shirt, according to screenshots that circulated online. "Shooting Makes Me Stronger," read another.

The shirts used a variety of photos that captured the moment, including one of the most indelible made by



Republican presidential candidate former President Donald Trump is surrounded by U.S. Secret Service agents at a campaign rally, Saturday, July 13, 2024, in Butler, Pa.

Associated Press

Associated Press photographer Evan Vucci.

While people around the world may have recognized the power of the images, Chinese manufacturers are particularly well positioned to quickly jump on something trending and make it into a product. It is the world's factory floor

and its highly competitive domestic e-commerce industry means its small retailers are poised to exploit all sorts of consumer product trends.

By Monday, many of the T-shirts were no longer easily found, with a search for "Trump T-shirt" on JD showing no results and on Tao-

obao showing other Trump T-shirts.

When asked, however, some shops were able to provide hidden links to the merchandise and other shirts could be found by searching for a Chinese nickname for Trump for a time.

It's not clear why the shirts

were hidden, but China's domestic internet, which is largely isolated from the global internet, is controlled by an extensive censorship system that also monitors its online commerce sites. The use of the images could raise copyright concerns.

"The Associated Press is proud of Evan Vucci's photo and recognizes its impact," said Lauren Easton, AP's vice president of corporate communications. "In addition, we reserve our rights to this powerful image."

An AP journalist was able to order a shirt with an image of the moment for 61 yuan (\$8), even though the original link said the shirt was no longer available. A customer service representative said it violated regulations, without elaborating, but then provided a link to order the shirt.

Another shop on Taobao offered five different T-shirts, all based on photos from Saturday's rally, when asked whether it had any showing Trump being shot at. They were selling for 34.9 yuan (\$4). □

# Estonia's Prime Minister Kaja Kallas steps down to become EU's top diplomat

By JARI TANNER

Associated Press

**HELSINKI (AP)** — Estonia's Prime Minister Kaja Kallas has stepped down as the leader of the Baltic country to become the foreign policy chief of the European Union later this year.

Kallas, Estonia's first female prime minister, handed in her formal resignation to President Alar Karis during a brief meeting at the Presidential Palace in the capital, Tallinn, on Monday.

Estonia under Kallas, 47, has been one of Europe's most vocal backers of Ukraine following the full-scale Russian invasion in February 2022. She replaces Josep Borrell of Spain, who has served as the EU foreign policy chief since 2019.

Summing up Kallas' 3 1/2

years at the helm of the nation of 1.3 million, Karis said in a statement that "it has been a time full of crises, the milestones (such as) the coronavirus, the economic recession and the war in Europe, when Russia destroyed our previous security picture with its aggression in Ukraine".

The prime minister's move automatically triggered the resignation of Kallas' three-party coalition Cabinet, made up of her center-right Reform Party, the Social Democratic Party and the liberal Estonia 200 party. It will continue as a caretaker government until the new Cabinet is sworn in, most likely in early August. In the last meeting of the outgoing Cabinet on Monday, Kallas underscored

her government's efforts to boost the security of Estonia, a NATO member that neighbors Russia.

"We have invested more in national defense than ever before and increased the annual defense budget to 1.4 billion euros (about \$1.5 billion), which is 3% of GDP," Kallas said, adding that in the past two years, the state defense budget has increased by nearly 70%. "These decisions help to ensure that Estonia is firmly protected and a safe place to live."

The Reform Party announced on June 29 that it chose party veteran and Climate Minister Kristen Michal as the prime minister candidate to replace Kallas who represented Estonia at a NATO summit in Washing-

ton last week. Under Kallas' leadership, Reform scored an overwhelming victory in the 2023 general election and holds a mandate to the prime minister post.

The Cabinet's composition is likely to remain the same but Michal, who is set

to succeed Kallas also as the Reform Party's chair, is currently holding talks with both the Social Democrats and the Estonia 200 to revise the current 4-year government program the three parties had originally agreed last year. □



Estonia's Prime Minister Kaja Kallas speaks during her arrival at the NATO summit in Washington, Thursday, July 11, 2024.

Associated Press

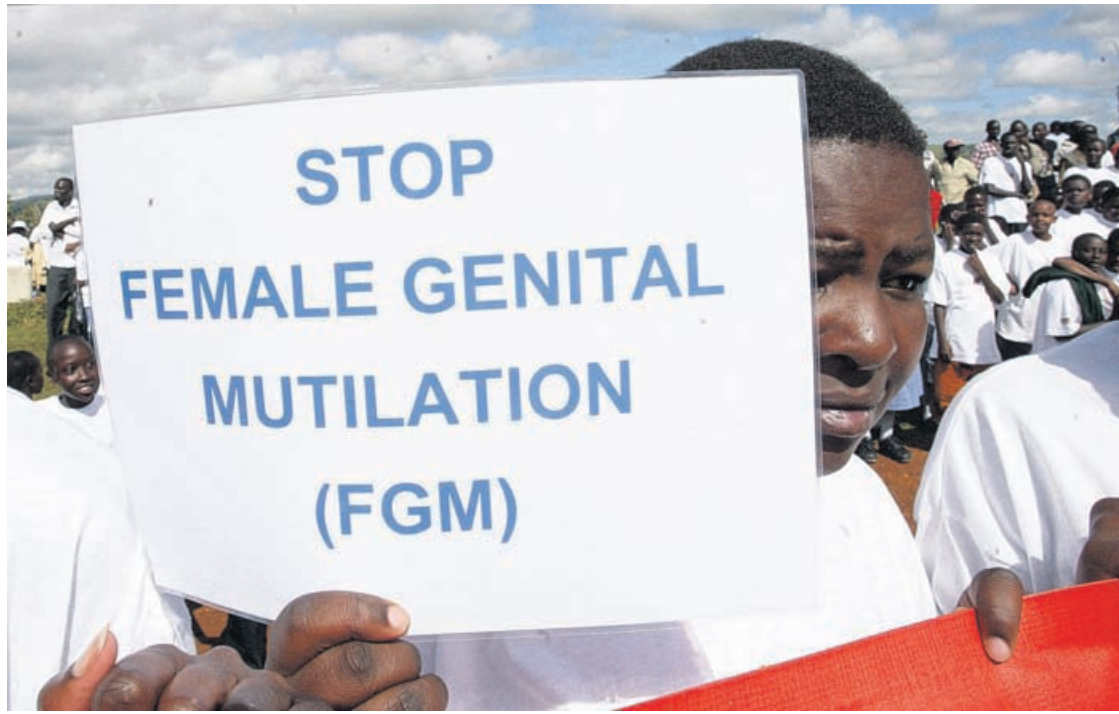


## Gambia upholds its ban on female genital cutting. Reversing it would have been a global first

By **RAMATOULIE JAWO** and **MONIKA PRONCZUK**  
Associated Press

**BANJUL, Gambia (AP)** — Lawmakers in the West African nation of Gambia on Monday rejected a bill that would have overturned a ban on female genital cutting. The attempt to become the first country in the world to reverse such a ban had been closely followed by activists abroad. The vote followed months of heated debate in the largely Muslim nation of less than 3 million people. Lawmakers effectively killed the bill by rejecting all its clauses and preventing a final vote.

The procedure, also called female genital mutilation, includes the partial or full removal of girls' external genitalia, often by traditional community practitioners with tools such as razor blades or at times by health workers. It can cause serious bleeding, death and childbirth complications but remains a widespread practice in parts of Africa. Activists and human rights groups were worried that a reversal of the ban in Gambia would overturn years of work against the centuries-



A Masai girl holds a protest sign during the anti-Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) run in Kilgoris, Kenya, on April 21, 2007.

old practice that's often performed on girls younger than 5 and rooted in the concepts of sexual purity and control.

Religious conservatives who led the campaign to reverse the ban argued the practice was "one of the virtues of Islam."

In March, the majority of lawmakers voted to advance the bill, prompting fears that the ban would be overturned. But atti-

tudes changed as rights activists campaigned and as doctors, religious figures and others testified for the health committee about the consequences of the practice. "It's such a huge sense of relief," one activist and survivor, Absa Samba, told The Associated Press after the vote, as she celebrated with others in front of parliament. "But I believe this is just the beginning of the work."

Fatou Baldeh, another activist and survivor, said she woke up that morning crying.

"Why have we been put through this for 11 months?" she asked, her voice shaking. "Why have we been forced to relive our traumas? Just because men didn't believe that female genital cutting harmed us." She added: "And right now, girls are still being cut. I hope this time it is not just a

law for decoration."

In Gambia, more than half of women and girls ages 15 to 49 have undergone the procedure, according to United Nations estimates. Former leader Yahya Jammeh unexpectedly banned the practice in 2015 without further explanation. But activists say enforcement has been weak and women have continued to be cut. The first prosecutions occurred last year, when three women were convicted for bringing their daughters to be cut and performing the practice. The cases sparked a public debate, and some said the prosecutions inspired the attempt to reverse the ban. UNICEF earlier this year said some 30 million women globally have undergone female genital cutting in the past eight years, most of them in Africa but others in Asia and the Middle East. More than 80 countries have laws prohibiting the procedure or allowing it to be prosecuted, according to a World Bank study cited earlier this year by the United Nations Population Fund. They include South Africa, Iran, India and Ethiopia. □

Associated Press

## Thailand is set to roll out a controversial \$13.8 billion handout plan in digital money to citizens

By **JINTAMAS SAKSORN-CHAI**

Associated Press  
**BANGKOK (AP)** — Thai-

land's prime minister said Monday that eligible businesses and individuals can register from August for dig-

ital cash handouts, a controversial program that will cost billions of dollars and is meant to boost the lagging economy.

The government announced in April the widely criticized ambitious plan, named the "Digital Wallet," meant to give 10,000 baht (about \$275) to 50 million citizens in digital money to spend at local businesses. Prime Minister Srettha Thavasin posted on the social platform X, saying the registration will begin Aug. 1 and that he has given instructions to ensure the smooth implementation of the program.

The "Digital Wallet" was a major campaign promise of the ruling Srettha's Pheu

Thai party ahead of last year's general election. The government says that this scheme will cause an "economic tornado," and Srettha has said the stimulus and subsequent consumption are expected to boost gross domestic product growth by 1.2 to 1.6 percentage points.

However, economists have criticized the program, calling it an ineffective way to contribute to sustainable economic growth compared to other measures. In addition, its financing has faced several hurdles, delaying its planned implementation. At first, the government said the state Bank for Agriculture and Agricultural Cooperatives

would cover some of the funding needed. However, after warnings by financial experts, it was announced that the project's funding would come out of the 2024 and 2025 fiscal budgets.

Deputy Minister of Finance Julapan Amornvivat said at a news conference on Monday the budgetary funding became possible after the plan's estimated cost dropped from 500 billion baht (\$13.8 billion) to 450 billion baht (\$12.4 billion), asserting that all estimated 50 million people will still be part of the program as only up to 90% of those eligible utilized them in previous handouts. □



Thailand's Prime Minister Srettha Thavasin, delivers his speech during the Soft Power Forum in Bangkok, Thailand, Monday, June 28, 2024.

Associated Press



## Initiation of Oranjestad's Certification Process as the Next "Culinary Capital" in the Caribbean

In a new and exciting development, Minister Geoffrey Wever has initiated the certification process for Oranjestad to become the next "Culinary Capital" in the Caribbean, a valuable recognition from the World Food Travel Association (WFTA) that will elevate our city's position. This significant step marks another phase of a broader strategy aimed at revitalizing Oranjestad.

The WFTA's "destination certification" of "Culinary Capital" is not just a title but also a testament to Oranjestad's rich culinary heritage and diversity. This process will put our local cuisine on the global map, promote food tourism, and enhance visitors' experiences. 'This initiative aligns perfectly with our ongoing efforts to breathe new life into the heart of Oranjestad,' the minister commented.

Revitalization Strategy



The application for certification as "Culinary Capital" is part of a holistic strategy by Minister Geoffrey Wever to revitalize Oranjestad. Our efforts include enhancing security and ensuring high cleanliness standards, improving the city's visual appeal through beautification projects, and increasing the area's accessibility.

Facilitating the return of various governmental departments to our city center to stimulate local businesses is also a focus. Additionally, there is an emphasis on attracting more people, creating an interesting environment that can host more events and festivals, among other activities. Ultimately, all these efforts will make our city center commercially more viable.

A "Culinary" Destination  
'This recognition will put Oranjestad on the global culinary map, attracting food lovers from all parts of the world. It will also provide a platform for our chefs, farmers, and local food producers to showcase their talents and products.'

The certification process involves a comprehensive evaluation of our culinary scene, including the quality of our food, the diversity of our culinary offerings, and our commitment to sustainability and local food sourcing.

We are confident that Oranjestad will reflect our culinary richness. The certification process is set to begin, and we are eager to keep the community informed of developments. 'Together, we can make Oranjestad a vibrant and dynamic destination,' stated Minister Geoffrey Wever.

## Completion of Phase 1 of Cas Veneranda



**Minister Geoffrey Wever recently held a meeting with the Stichting Monumenten Fonds Aruba regarding the renovation project of Cas Veneranda to discuss its progress.**

The demolition phase of the project has been successfully completed. This was not an easy process, and some surprises were encountered along the way. Additionally, more was learned about the history and architecture of Cas Veneranda during the demolition. Now, the focus is shifting to the renovation

phase.

The next phase involves preparing and submitting contractor bids, after which a contractor will be selected. The tentative start date for construction is planned for September 2.

'The Cas Veneranda Renovation Project is of utmost importance and a key part of the overall revitalization of Oranjestad. We are working hard to preserve its historical value and continue revitalizing the center of Oranjestad,' stated Minister Wever.

## In celebrating 200 years of Oranjestad... Learn about the history of the famous town hall!

(Oranjestad)— If you've ever taken a stroll through main street Oranjestad, you may have stumbled upon a big green house with beautiful colonial design. This legendary house, now used as a town hall for civil marriages, was once owned by a wealthy doctor and formed part of the elite neighborhood in Oranjestad.



town hall for civil marriages and is a cultural monument on the island.

The house was designed by architect Chibi Wever, and constructed under the leadership of famous master carpenter, Dada Picus, who was famous at the time for his construction of beautiful buildings.

The construction of the house started once Jacobo and Maria got engaged. It is said that during the time of construction, Maria was not allowed to see the building nor be anywhere near the construction site. It wasn't until after her honeymoon that she saw the completed mansion for the first time, furnished entirely by her sisters-in-law.

The mansion also contained the doctor's office, as well as a pharmacy. After the death of Jacobo, the house was inherited by his son, an Aruban dentist, who converted Jacobo's office into his own dental practice. Over the years, the house was rented and used by third parties, but eventually fell into disrepair, as the maintenance

cost became too high to cover.

The land was sold to Land Aruba in 1986, but it did not see a renovation until 1997. Nowadays, it serves to host weddings, and is attached to a modern building situated behind—the Aruban census office.

Jacobo and Maria's mansion was situated in front of another famous mansion, owned by Jacobo's brother Frederico Maximiliaan (Machi) Arends. Frederico was married to Veneranda (whom the mansion was named after). Their house was also constructed by Dada Picus, utilizing Veneranda's design vision that was inspired by a house she saw in Cartagena, Colombia.

Nowadays, this mansion lies in ruins. However, the Aruban government recently announced its official restoration, with plans to convert this monument into a governmental office and public space for visitors of Oranjestad.

Source and pictures credited to: "De Kolibrie op de Rots (en meer over the geschiedenis van Aruba)" by Evert Bongers.





# Paseo Herencia; An exciting destination for leisure and entertainment

**NOORD — Paseo Herencia, situated in the heart of Palm Beach and within walking distance from the high-rise hotels, beckons with a diverse array of shopping, dining, and entertainment options in an outdoor setting.**

## Shopping

Paseo Herencia presents a captivating selection of stores catering to various preferences, encompassing beachwear, apparel, fragrances, footwear, jewelry, keepsakes, and much more. Unwind at Maggy's, indulging in their salon services while exploring a range of beauty products. For a memorable gift crafted from natural ingredients, explore Aruba Aloe's offerings. Iconic brands like Tommy Hilfiger, Calvin Klein, Aldo, Carmen Stefens, Nike, and Pandora stand among the favorites.

## Dining

Embark on a global culinary journey at Paseo Herencia's diverse array of restaurants, each offering a

unique dining experience. From the vibrant flavors of Iguana Cantina's Mexican cuisine to the Spanish elegance of Xixon Spanish Restaurant, the innovative fusion of Pizza and Sushi at Fusion Cuisine, the grilled delights of Skewers Grill, the comfort of The Lazy Turtle, the creativity at Drunk's Denial, and the seafood sensation of Sexy Shrimps Bar, and the familiar warmth of Starbucks, indulge in an unforgettable gastronomic adventure that spans the world's finest cuisines, all within the charming ambiance of our outdoor center.

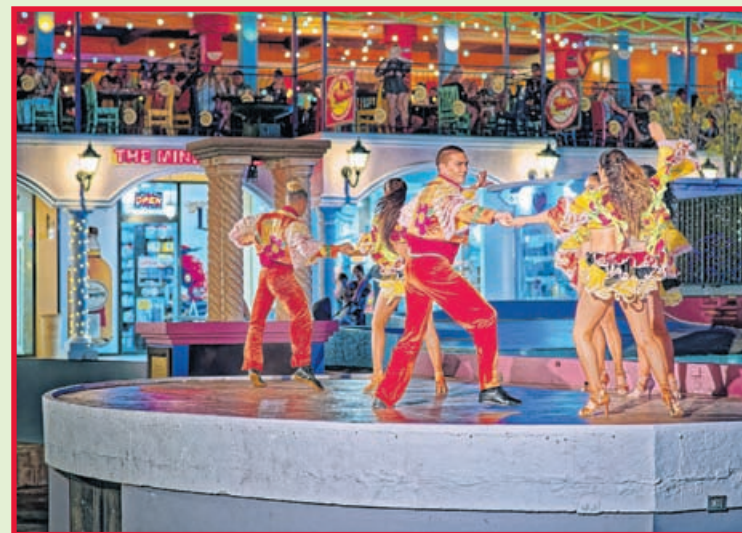
## VIP Cinema

Indulge in an unparalleled cinematic experience at Caribbean Cinemas VIP, nestled on Paseo Herencia's second floor. Relax in supremely comfortable reclining seats while enjoying movies on high-quality screens with state-of-the-art projection and 7.1 Dolby surround sound. Don't forget to relish the delectable buttery popcorn.

## Entertainment

Paseo Herencia offers live entertainment from Monday to Friday at 8pm on the center stage, as well as captivating nightly water shows at 7:30pm, 8:30pm, and 9:30pm. Thrill-seekers can explore the Airsoft experience, located behind The Lazy Turtle. For picture-perfect moments, capture Instagram-worthy shots at the Angel Wings installation between Pandora and Free Spirit, or amidst the Flying mosaic hearts behind King Churros. There's more fun in store with delightful kids' activities, including a Kid's carousel and train ride, available every day from 6 pm to 10 pm.

Parking is complimentary for up to two hours when shopping, dining, or enjoying a movie at Paseo Herencia. Simply present your purchase receipt to the parking cashier. For more details on specials and events, visit the Paseo Herencia website at [www.paseoherencia.com](http://www.paseoherencia.com).





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## Aruban snacks and where to find them

**ORANJESTAD** — Want to taste something different for a change? How about some Aruban snacks that you can find all around the island? Hop in your car, and go to these locations to find some of the most popular and tasty snacks that are beloved by our locals.



One of the staples of Aruban cuisine and snacks is the Pastechi. Pastechi is a Caribbean fried pastry that is filled with cheese, meat, chicken, veggies and sometimes even fish! Or perhaps you might want to try a croquette, locally called a "krokette," which is a crusty fried snack with typically a meat and dough mix filling. The Aruban kroket is based on its Dutch counterpart, the "bitterbal".

These two snacks are typically found in all local snack trucks, which can be found all over the island, including on the side of the main road that stretches from San Nicolas to the Hotel Area. You can also find pastechis and kroketts at local bakeries and snack shops, like Bright Bakery in Piedra Plat, Huchada in Santa Cruz or Pastechi House in the city center. These places may also sell other snacks and sandwiches too, perfect for on-the-road lunch break.

While you're at it, why not accompany your snack with a refreshing



"batido"? Batidos are fruit shakes, typically made with added milk for some creaminess. However, you can also ask to hold the milk. Batidos are commonly found in snack shops too. You may find some batido shops next the flea markets downtown, or if you're on your way to San Nicolas, at Mauchi Smoothies and Juice Bar in Savaneta (located at the side of the main road).

If you are looking for something a bit more fresh and healthy, why not try some coconuts, or shaved ice from local vendors? These vendors carry their little shop at the back of their truck, so they are ever-moving around the island. However, there are a few spots where you

can almost always find a coconut/shaved ice vendor:

1. Right next to the Red Anchor in San Nicolas, on the way to Baby Beach.
2. Along the main road next to the airport field.
3. At the California Light House.
4. At the Alto Vista Chapel.

These vendors may also sell other delights, like the beloved coconut-based dessert "cocada" or peanuts. All in all, in Aruba, you can always find some place to take a break and have a bite of something local, you maybe just might have to look for them!

Photo credit: wheninaruba.com



## Prohibited by law: leaving the island with seashells, white sand or corals

**(Oranjestad)**—Often times, the customs department at the airport intercepts many tourists leaving the island with seashells, white sand and/or corals as souvenirs.

Conforming to the international treaty of CITES and our local law which protects our Flora & Fauna, it is absolutely prohibited to take any seashell, sand and coral outside of Aruba. This is to protect our environment. The high number of seashells, coral and amount of sand confiscated is very strange and it is

suspected that our own locals are the ones selling these to the tourists, which is unacceptable.

Upon confiscation at the airport, you can also face a fine that they have to pay before leaving. This is surely not a pleasant experience for the tourist. This also leads to a negative reaction which can put our tourism in a negative light.

Though we love to accommodate our visitors, let's all give nature the respect it deserves by protecting

our environment. Stop collecting seashells, white sand and corals from our shores and stop buying or accepting these from local sellers or companies.

We want our future generations and visitors to enjoy the beauty of our beaches, shells and corals in a sustainable way, without destroying or disrupting the Aruban ecosystem. Help us protect what is ours!





## Did you know about... Basic driving rules on Aruba (part 1)

(Oranjestad)—Have you ever felt confused when you're driving on the highways or backstreets of Aruba? Then we present a simple guide to some of the basic rules of Aruban traffic, along with some tips for things to look out for.

### Speed limit

Legally, the speed limit on the four-lane highways is 80 km/h. This speed limit also counts for the main roads that are connected to the highways. The minimum speed is 50 km/h. Most people drive around 60 km/h on the main roads and about 70 km/h on the highways. There are also areas that indicate a speed limit on a sign; these are usually around populated and school areas.

The four-lane highways contain the left-lane, also known as the "fast" lane for each direction. Here is where vehicles can drive up to the maximum speed. However, legally it is not permitted to drive for long periods of time on the left lane. This lane is primarily designed for drivers to switch lanes before a roundabout, for example, if your exit on the roundabout is on your far left. The general lane to drive in—both at maximum and minimum speed—is on the right lane.

### Roundabouts

Speaking of roundabouts, it is important to know where you have to enter and drive on the roundabout to make your exit. A good rule of thumb is to count the exits starting from your right side. So, exit 1 would be on your right; exit 2 would be straight ahead; exit 3 would be on your far left and exit 4 would lead to the road paralleled to the one you're on, heading in the other direction.

Most roundabouts have these 4 exits, so they are relatively simple. When you're driving on the four-lane highway, it is important to know when to switch to the left lane to make your exit: if your exit is on your far left (exit 3), then



you need to switch to the left lane on the highway before nearing the roundabout so you can take the path that leads you directly to your exit. If your exit is on your right or if you're going straight ahead, you can keep driving in the right lane of the highway.

It's also important to know that vehicles about to enter the roundabout must yield to those already on it. A good rule of thumb is to look out if someone is coming from your left side.

However, other roundabouts can be quite tricky to navigate...

### Watty Vos Boulevard (the "paperclip" roundabout)

Probably the biggest roundabout on the island, the "paperclip" roundabout on the Watty Vos Boulevard is one of the trickier roundabouts that could—and has—caused confusion among both tourists and locals. However, once you take a good look at it, it's fairly simple. The basis is just the same as a regular roundabout

(left exit? left lane! etc.), but instead of having four different exits like on a regular roundabout, now you have two extra; one on the right and the other on the left side of the roundabout. The rules don't change at all, you just have to keep an extra eye open.

### Airport roundabout

Ah, yes. The infamous airport roundabout. The favorite roundabout amongst local, because of its easy (hard) lanes that never (always) cause confusion among drivers. Sarcasm aside, this roundabout can be tricky to enter, especially when you're driving from the direction of the airport heading. When you're driving away from the airport reaching the roundabout, you'll be faced with three lanes. The far right lane is to take the exit 1 out heading east (right lane of highway). The middle exit is used for exit 1 (left lane of highway), 2 and 3. The far left exit is used to only exit on exit 3 (left lane of highway) and 4.

### "Las Americas" roundabout

The Las Americas roundabout is located near the Talk of the Town hotel, west from the airport roundabout. This roundabout may look like a regular roundabout—and for the most part, it is. However, when you are driving from the east going in the direction of town, please take note that there are two exits on your right.

When you're driving towards this roundabout, you'll notice that the road becomes wider, splitting into two lanes. The right lane is used to take the first and second exit on the right. If you want to exit straight ahead, you must drive on the left lane!

It's always scary to drive in new places where the traffic may look and work differently, but once you get it right once, you'll get the hang of it in no time. Additionally, all roundabouts and roads on Aruba have signs and arrows painted on the road to help guide you. So take your time, keep your eyes open and don't forget to wear a seat belt!





# The district of Savaneta

## A quick history guide to the island's first capital

Oranjestad)—Before Oranjestad became the island nation's capital, Aruba's first capital was the district of Savaneta. Here is where the cultural identity of Aruba was born, and from where the rest of the island developed into what it is today.

Savaneta is said to have been the first place where the Caquetio inhabitants first stepped foot on the island. Though there isn't hard evidence to back this up, but considering the legend of the Cacique Arua, it is believed that there were already movements on Aruba—and Savaneta—around 88 AD.

The Caquetios probably made their way to the island either from Venezuela, Colombia or other Caribbean islands in the region, but with good weather it was relatively easy for them to travel back and forth in their canoes. So, since the Caquetios discovered the island, Aruba found her first form of civilization.

It wasn't until 1499 when Aruba met another group of people who set foot on the island: the Spanish explorer Alonso de Ojeda. De Ojeda first took notice of Aruba off the coast of Venezuela, during his exploration of the Latin American country. This was on August 9th, 1499. However, de Ojeda didn't actually sail to the island till 4 days later, on August 23rd, 1499. This was the beginning of the Spanish era on Aruba (1499-1636).

Alonso usually didn't stop at every island or land he saw, especially not in the Caribbean. He would often take notice of land from afar and continue sailing. However, Aruba was an exception. He had



heard that there were "quebracho" trees on the island, which were commonly used to produce dye or paint. But since these trees could not be found in Savaneta, he continued to search in the area of what is now known as Santa Cruz. The best way to transport the tree barks was via a route passing through Savaneta, and so the first road between Savaneta and Santa Cruz was made.

The Dutch colonial era (1636-1805) During the 80-year war between The Netherlands and Spain, Dutch explorers and merchants began to travel to the ABC islands. Once they landed in Aruba, they deported the small Arawakan and Spanish community that was living on the island. This was the beginning of colonization of the ABC islands by the Dutch empire. Around the same, the West Indian Company (WIC) was born. Bonaire and Curacao were mostly used for plantations, where the Dutch had transported slaves from Africa. Aruba, on the other hand, was mostly used to raise cattle and to house the haring factory. The Dutch had often forced the indigenous community to work for them. In 1636, when the Netherlands won the war against Spain, the country surrendered the islands to the Dutch.

The Dutch administration appointed the island's first commander, an Irish man named N. Williams. Because the Dutch were interested in other Caribbean islands and countries in South America, they imported Dutch merchants and business

men, all of whom resided in Savaneta. This way, Savaneta officially became the island's first capital.

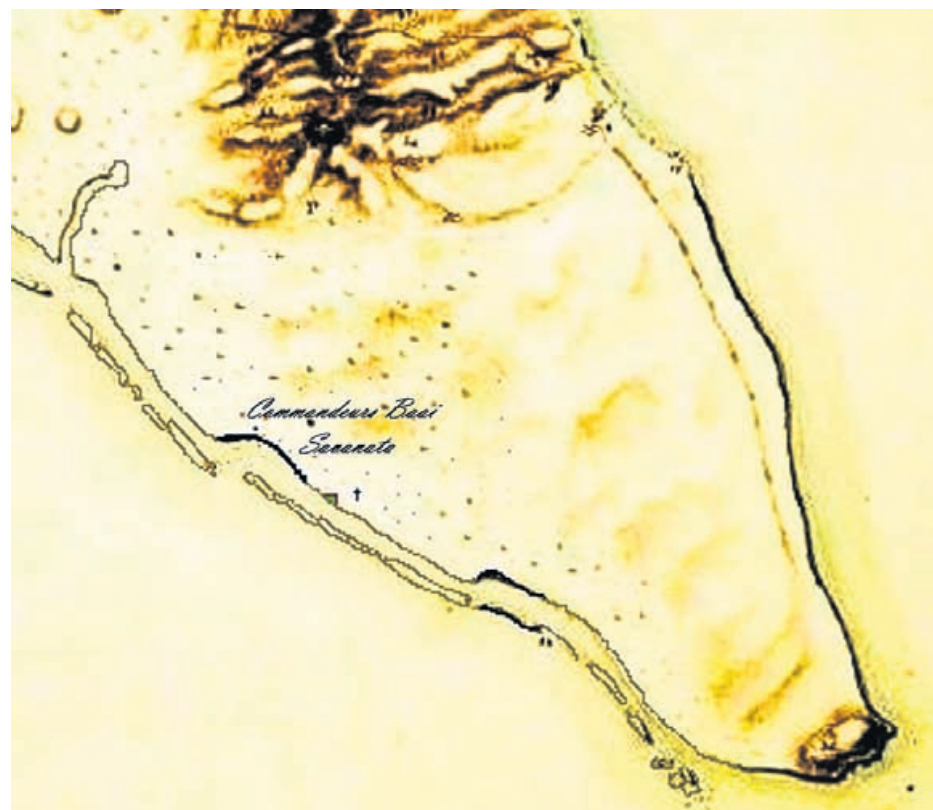
However, at the end of the 18th century, the commander at the time, J.R. Lauffer, moved his office to what is now "Horse Bay" in Oranjestad. Because the highest office on the island moved away from Savaneta, the capital lost its title to what was called then Playa.

### How Savaneta got its name

The name Savaneta probably has a Spanish origin. It was said that when the Spanish climbed a hill called Yara, they saw that the area was mostly open and had no big trees. In Spanish, such a land area is called a "sabana".

Because of its land surface, Savaneta was a great place to construct cattle farms. From here, the farmer culture on Aruba was born. Before the Aruban Gold Rush and the construction of the Refinery in San Nicolas, most residents were farmers, and Savaneta had many inhabitants that farmed fruits and vegetables. They also continued the tradition of raising cattle, like goat, sheep, pigs and horses. Savaneta was one of the first places on the island to have a general farming culture. From this culture, many other traditions were born, like the Dera Gay Holiday that we celebrate every year on June 24th.

**Source:** Historia di Savaneta (History of Savaneta) by Adolf "Dufi" Kock.



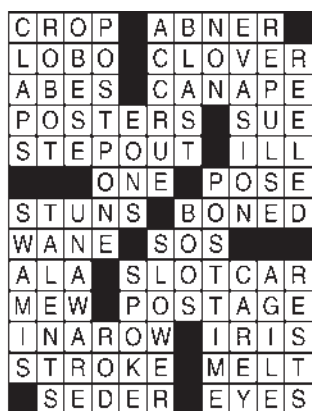


# CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

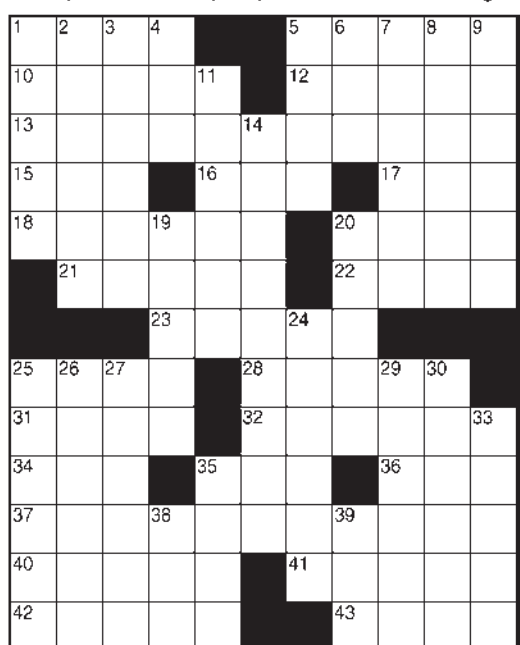
- ACROSS**
- 40 Travel
  - 1 California stop
  - wine
  - 41 Snail trail
  - 42 Wear
  - 5 Jeweler's down
  - unit
  - 43 Lewd look

- DOWN**
- 12 Fill with joy
  - 13 Places to sign
  - 15 Stretch of years
  - 16 Tennis need
  - 17 Back muscle
  - 18 Eye part
  - 20 Face feature
  - 21 Not flimsy
  - 22 Blown away
  - 23 Mosque faith
  - 25 Tibet setting
  - 28 Articles
  - 31 Await
  - 32 "Forget it!"
  - 34 Industri-ous insect
  - 35 Director Brooks
  - 36 Gardner of movies
  - 37 Broadway musical groups



Yesterday's answer

- 8 Relaxed
- 9 Did lab
- work
- 11 Court
- sport
- 14 Editor's concerns
- 19 Homer
- work
- 20 Identified
- 24 Coral isles
- 25 Cochise's people
- 26 Man of Brazil
- 27 Com-pletely
- 29 Nasty
- 30 "Help!"
- 33 Intense
- beam
- 35 Cart
- puller
- 38 Carmine
- 39 Suffering



4-23

AXYDLBAAXR  
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

4-23

CRYPTOQUOTE

V BTTE FQMUM TK VSR

ADTJIE WVPM V SMXTIJRQTH

QHAQEM OTJ. — ADTDSMD

VBDEVADITT

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: YOU CAN CUT ALL THE FLOWERS, BUT YOU CANNOT KEEP SPRING FROM COMING. — PABLO NERUDA

## Cruise ship Schedule: July 01 - July 30 2024

			ARR	DEPT	BERTH	
THU	04	CELEBRITY BEYOND	08.00	21.00	C	1
TUE	09	ADVENTURE OF THE SEAS	08.00	20.00	B	1
		CARNIVAL HORIZON	09.00	22.00	C	1
WED	10	RHAPSODY OF THE SEAS	09.00	21.00	C	1
TUE	16	CARNIVAL CELEBRATION	08.00	22.00	C	1
		CARNIVAL VISTA	13.00	23.00	I	1
WED	17	CELEBRITY BEYOND	08.00	21.00	C	1
TUE	23	CARNIVAL HORIZON	09.00	22.00	C	1
TUE	30	CELEBRITY BEYOND	08.00	21.00	C	1

## Helpful tips for your stay on Aruba

Supermarket hours

(Oranjestad)—When traveling to another country, especially for the first time, it is always better to be over-prepared than under-prepared. That is why we have a list of basic but important information that we think may come in handy to Aruba's visitors.

lets used on the island: type A with two flat prongs; type B with two flat and one grounding prong, and on occasion, type F with two round prong and two earth clips on the side. However, Type A is most commonly found in homes and establishments.

### Electrical power



Aruba generally operates on 110V to 127V supply voltage and 60Hz. There are also three types of out-

### Drinking water



The water that flows through the sinks of every house, hotels and other establishments is distilled and perfectly safe to drink. Aruba's drinking water exceeds WHO's international standards for water quality, so there is no need to buy bottled water from the store.

### Safety



Since February 2024, Aruba has been categorized as the safest country in the Caribbean by The Telegraph, and many tourist that visit have often told us how they feel safe to explore the island or walk around at night. However, rare incidents do occurs, so keep yourself and your belongings safe.

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In this photo provided by the Department of Conservation rangers Jim Fyfe and Tūmai Cassidy walk alongside what is believed to be a rare spade-toothed whale, on July 5, 2024, after it was found washed ashore on a beach near Otago, New Zealand.

Associated Press

## World's rarest whale may have washed up on New Zealand beach, possibly shedding clues on species

By CHARLOTTE GRAHAM-McLAY

Associated Press

WELLINGTON, New Zealand

(AP) — Spade-toothed whales are the world's rarest, with no live sightings ever recorded. No one knows how many there are, what they eat, or even where they live in the vast expanse of the southern Pacific Ocean. However, scientists in New Zealand may have finally caught a break.

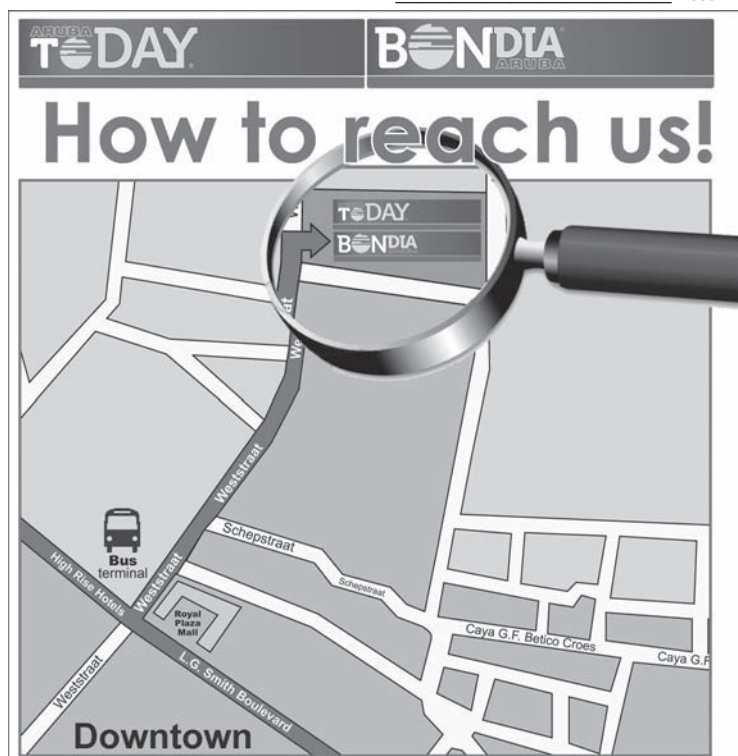
The country's conservation agency said Monday a creature that washed up on a South Island beach this month is believed to be

a spade-toothed whale. The five-meter-long creature, a type of beaked whale, was identified after it washed ashore on an Otago beach from its color patterns and the shape of its skull, beak and teeth. □

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Caribbean Mercantile Bank N.V.  
Acc. #23951903  
RBC Royal Bank Acc. #1330772

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# Reviving Hollywood glamor of the silent movie era, experts piece together a century-old pipe organ

By **COREY WILLIAMS**

**Associated Press**

**DETROIT (AP)** — A massive pipe organ that underscored the drama and comedy of silent movies with live music in Detroit's ornate Hollywood Theatre nearly a century ago was dismantled into thousands of pieces and stashed away.

The Barton Opus, built in 1927, spent four decades stored in a garage, attic and basement in suburban Detroit. But the towering musical curiosity is being lovingly restored in Indianapolis and eventually will be trucked, piece by piece, to the Rochester Institute of Technology in western New York, to be reassembled and rehoused in a theater specifically designed to accommodate it. In its heyday, the Barton Opus was able to recreate the sounds of many instruments, including strings, flutes and tubas, says Carlton Smith, who has been restoring the organ since 2020. It also contained real percussion instruments such as a piano, xylophone, glockenspiel, cymbals and drums and could produce sound effects including steamboat and bird whistles, Smith says.

For many moviegoers, the organs and the organists



**Carlton Smith, left, and Justin Nimmo pose in front of the console of the Barton Opus 234 theater organ that is undergoing restoration at Carlton Smith Pipe Organ Restorations in Indianapolis, Tuesday, July 2, 2024.**

were the stars.

"One guy could do it all," Smith says. "In the big cities, they were literally filling the theaters' thousands of seats multiple times during the day. They were showing live shows along with the films. It was a big production." The Barton Opus enjoyed good acoustics at the Hollywood Theatre, according to the Detroit Theatre Organ Society. The theaters in Detroit at that time, the golden age of the city's auto industry, were as

glamorous as any in New York, Chicago, Los Angeles and San Francisco, according to John Lauter, an organist and organ technician.

"We were such a rich market for moviegoers that the theater owners built these palatial places," Lauter says. "There were no plain Jane movie houses back then." Lauter, who also is the director of the Detroit Theatre Organ Society and president of the Motor City Theatre Organ Society, says

the Hollywood Theatre organ was one of the largest made by the Bartola Musical Instrument Co. of Oshkosh, Wisconsin. Only three were sold, while the other two were installed in the Highland Theatre in Chicago and the Rialto Square Theatre in Joliet, Illinois.

Of the three, this is "the last one left that hasn't been altered," Smith says.

In the decades that followed, televisions began to appear in living rooms across the nation and si-

lent movie houses fell out of favor. The Hollywood Theatre closed in the 1950s, its fixtures were sold and its famed Barton Opus was on the verge of being lost to history.

But in the early 1960s, Lauter's friend, Henry Przybylski, bought it at auction for about \$3,500. Przybylski scrambled to remove the massive instrument, parts of which stood two stories tall, before the theater was demolished.

"He pulled together all of his friends in the winter of 1963," Lauter says. "The building had no electricity and no heat. They came in with Coleman lanterns and block and tackle."

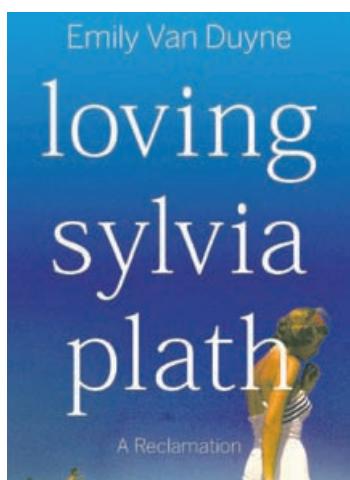
They took the organ apart and Przybylski an engineer and organ buff transported the thousands of pieces back to his Dearborn Heights home where it would remain, unassembled, for about 40 years.

"He never heard or played that instrument ever," Lauter says. "He lived a majority of his life owning that thing. He'd roll up the garage door and there would be that console in there. He made it known it was the very best there was."

Przybylski died in 2000, but that did not spell the end of the Barton Opus' odyssey. □

**Associated Press**

## Book Review: 'Loving Sylvia Plath' attends to polarizing writer's circumstances more than her work



**This cover image released by W.W. Norton shows "Loving Sylvia Plath: A Reclamation" by Emily Van Duyne.**

**Associated Press**

By **KRYSTA FAURIA**

**Associated Press**

A popular form of writing nowadays is one that involves reexamining the lives of people, often members of marginalized groups, who have otherwise been flattened or short-changed by history.

How has society's assumptions or prejudices informed how a person is remembered, many authors are asking, and what information is available to us that may tell a more complete story?

These are the questions Emily Van Duyne, an associate professor at Stockton University, asks in "Loving Sylvia Plath: A Reclamation."

In the wake of Plath's death by sui-

cide, her husband and fellow writer Ted Hughes constructed a narrative that he was the "stabilizing factor" in his wife's life but that, in the end, even he couldn't save her.

But Van Duyne rejects any notion that Plath was a bad mother or merely a morbid poet.

She maintains Plath ought to be remembered as a complicated woman, a formidable writer one who outshined Hughes and almost certainly a victim of domestic abuse.

This book is not, for the most part, a hermeneutic study or close reading of Plath's writings. Rather, Van Duyne's source material for this reclaimed portrait of Plath are her circumstances.

Van Duyne seeks to subvert Hughes' narrative of Plath's life and what drove her to end it. In the wake of #MeToo and cultural conversations about believing women, Van Duyne argues Plath's story ought to be given a fresh look.

Those wanting a primer on reading Plath or a comprehensive biography should look elsewhere to the plethora of extant literature on the enigmatic literary giant.

But "Loving Sylvia Plath:

A Reclamation" should be seen as supplementary material for those seeking to better understand the circumstances surrounding her final years. □



## Brian Harman starts his British Open title defense by returning the claret jug

By DOUG FERGUSON  
AP Golf Writer

**TROON, Scotland (AP)** — Of all the recent traditions in the Royal & Ancient game, what Brian Harman took part in on Monday afternoon might be the least enjoyable.

Returning the claret jug. The formal handover of the British Open trophy required a little pomp. Harman was in the back seat of an SUV. The destination was not much longer than the 40-foot birdie putt he made last year on the 14th hole on his way to winning the Open. But he had to wait for the film crew to be set, for the traffic on the road to clear.

"It's all yours," Harman told Martin Slumbers, the R&A CEO who took back golf's oldest trophy that apparently has seen its share of the finest wine and bourbon in the year since Harman won at Royal Liverpool.

Harman is a straight shooter with a rifle, with his mouth and last year with his putter but a staged moment as this didn't bother him.

"In my opinion, it's the coolest trophy in all of sports," Harman said. "So I think it's



The 2023 Open Champion Brian Harman of the United States speaks during a press conference at the media tent for the British Open Golf Championships at Royal Troon golf club in Troon, Scotland, Monday, July 15, 2024.

Associated Press

deserving of all of the pageantry that's involved with it."

Getting it back by the end of the week is the real challenge.

The homecoming of the claret jug was an unofficial way to launch the start of the final men's major of the year. The 152nd Open Championship begins Thursday on the Scottish

links along the Firth of Clyde on the Irish Sea.

Royal Troon is renowned for its pot bunkers that are so deep they effectively serve as a one-shot penalty when tee shots find them on the longer holes. The outward holes are shorter with the prevailing wind, the inward holes are longer and into the wind.

"You have to take them

on," Scottie Scheffler said. Harman had gone six years without a win until putting together a masterpiece last year to lead over the final 51 holes and win by six. He hasn't won since then, a matter of getting his putter to cooperate. He hopes that's the case this week.

"You can work and work and work. You just never know when that work is

going to pay off," Harman said. "You never know when the peak is coming. You never know when you're going to catch a little bit of momentum. So you just have to hope it's a big week."

No one has won back to back in the British Open since Padraig Harrington in 2007 (Carnoustie) and 2008 (Royal Birkdale). Go back to 1960 and the list of repeat winners includes only Tiger Woods, Tom Watson, Lee Trevino and Arnold Palmer.

"A little sad to give it back, but I'll remember everywhere it's been forever," Harman said. "I'm happy to give it back, happy to be here. Ready to get going." Royal Troon is green and lush, and the rough is particularly thick at the base of turf. This isn't likely to be a bright and sunny week along the Ayrshire coast, and the links have been busy.

Woods arrived Sunday and went 18 holes, spending much of his time chipping and putting. His son Charlie is not with him, instead at home preparing for the U.S. Junior Amateur next week outside Detroit. □

## Wimbledon champion Barbora Krejckova returns to the top 10, and Carlos Alcaraz stays at No. 3

**LONDON (AP)** — Wimbledon champion Barbora Krejckova returned to the WTA's top 10 for the first time in six months on Monday, and runner-up Jasmine Paolini rose to a career-best No. 5.

Krejckova's run to her second Grand Slam title, capped by a 6-2, 2-6, 6-4 victory over Paolini on Saturday, allowed the 28-year-old player from the Czech Republic to jump 22 places to No. 10. Krejckova had last been that high in the rankings the week of Jan. 8; in the past, she reached No. 2 in singles and No. 1 in doubles.

Paolini moved up from No. 7 by becoming the first woman since Serena Wil-

liams to get to the finals at Wimbledon and the French Open in the same year. Paolini lost to Iga Swiatek in the title match at Roland Garros last month.

Carlos Alcaraz's second consecutive championship at the All England Club, and fourth major title overall, did not affect his ranking. He stayed at No. 3, with Jannik Sinner still at No. 1 despite losing in the quarterfinals, and runner-up Novak Djokovic held on to the No. 2 spot after being defeated by Alcaraz 6-2, 6-2, 7-6 (4) on Sunday.

There was no movement in the rest of the ATP's top five, either, with Alexander Zverev at No. 4, and Daniil Medvedev at No. 5.

But Alex de Minaur moved from No. 9 to a career-high No. 6 by reaching the quarterfinals. The Australian was supposed to meet Djokovic at that stage but needed to withdraw before that match because of an injured hip.

Swiatek remained at No. 1 in the WTA following a third-round loss at the All England Club, and the rest of the top four also was unchanged, with Coco Gauff at No. 2, Aryna Sabalenka at No. 3, and Elena Rybakina at No. 4.

Marketa Vondrousova, who won Wimbledon a year ago and was defeated in the first round this time, slid from No. 6 to No. 18. Ons Jabeur, the runner-

up at the grass-court Grand Slam tournament in 2022 and 2023, went from No. 10

to No. 16 after bowing out in the third round. □



Barbora Krejckova, left, of the Czech Republic holds her trophy after defeating Jasmine Paolini, right, of Italy in the women's singles final at the Wimbledon tennis championships in London, Saturday, July 13, 2024.

Associated Press



# MLB batting average near half-century low and velocity at all-time high

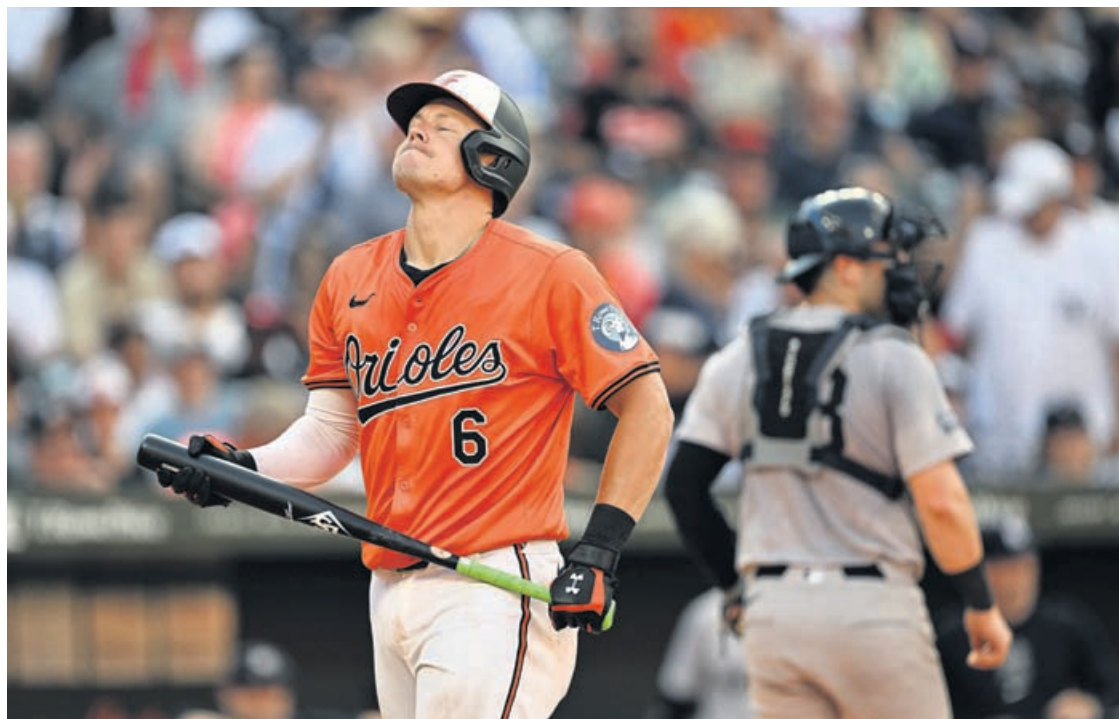
By **RONALD BLUM**  
AP Baseball Writer

**ARLINGTON, Texas (AP)** — Baseball can't run away from its lack of runs. Batting averages are near half-century lows. Velocity is at an all-time high. "Run scoring, it's not easy to do. It's hard and it's getting harder," Minnesota manager Rocco Baldelli said. "Pitchers are getting better by the outing." The major league batting average was .240 through April and .239 in May, the lowest since the bottom of .237 in 1968's Year of the Pitcher. It's risen slightly along with the temperature as spring turned to summer: .246 in June and .250 in July, according to the Elias Sports Bureau.

Still, the season average of .243 heading into the All-Star break was just ahead of 2022 and 1968 as the lowest since the dead-ball era ended in 1920.

"Batting average was down a little bit. That's not necessarily a good thing if you're looking for action in the game," baseball Commissioner Rob Manfred said in late May.

And the drop isn't just in the big leagues. This year's



**Baltimore Orioles' Ryan Mountcastle (6) reacts after striking out against New York Yankees pitcher Luis Gil during the sixth inning of a baseball game, Saturday, July 13, 2024, in Baltimore.**

Associated Press

minor league batting average is .243, down from .256 in 2019.

"I didn't see 100 (mph) when I was playing. It's commonplace now," said Los Angeles Dodgers manager Dave Roberts, whose last season was 2008.

Average four-seam fastball velocity is 94.2 mph this year, matching 2023 and up from 91.1 mph in 2008. There were 3,880 pitches of 100 mph or higher last year,

up from 214 in 2008.

Just at Triple-A this year there have been 461.

"You can tell as a hitter. Guys are going to the top with the fastballs," said Dylan Crews, the No. 2 draft pick last year and now at Washington's Triple-A Rochester farm team.

In an age of shortened attention spans, Major League Baseball has tried to increase action by instituting limits on defensive

shifts in 2023 along with a pitch clock to cut dead time. The average time of a nine-inning game dropped from 3 hours, 4 minutes in 2022 to 2:40 last year and 2:36 thus far this season, but runs remain near post-Steroids Era lows: 4.39 per team each game, down from 4.62 last year and up from 4.28 in 2022.

Still, hitters have cut down slightly on strikeouts: the rate of 8.36 per team per

game this season is the lowest since 2017, down from 8.61 last year and a record 8.81 in 2019.

"There's more spin rate. There's harder throwers," San Diego star third baseman Manny Machado said. "There's just so much information and I think that's what creates the havoc and makes hitting a little bit harder."

The percentage of fastballs four-seamers, sinkers and cutters is 55.5% this year, just above last season's 55.4%. It was 62.5% in 2015. Spin rates on sliders, sweepers and slurve have increased from 2,106 revolutions per minute in 2015 to 2,475 this year and their use has increased from 10.9% to 22.5%. Team works view video and dissect data to provide pitchers pointers and batters blueprints. The Dodgers employ senior directors of baseball systems applications and baseball systems platforms along with directors of baseball strategy and information, quantitative analysis, baseball product development, integrative baseball performance, performance innovation lab and baseball innovation. □

## Baltimore's Corbin Burnes to start against Pittsburgh's Paul Skenes in All-Star Game

By **RONALD BLUM**  
AP Baseball Writer

**ARLINGTON, Texas (AP)** — Baltimore's Corbin Burnes



**Baltimore Orioles starting pitcher Corbin Burnes throws during the second inning of a baseball game against the Chicago Cubs, Wednesday, July 10, 2024, in Baltimore.**

Associated Press

will start for the American League in Tuesday night's All-Star Game against Pittsburgh rookie Paul Skenes. A 29-year-old right-hander, Burnes is 9-4 with a 2.93 ERA in his first season with the Orioles, who acquired him from Milwaukee just before spring training. The 2021 NL Cy Young Award winner, Burnes is an All-Star for the fourth straight season. He will become the fifth Orioles pitcher to start an All-Star Game, the first since Steve Stone in 1980.

Skenes, who made his major league debut on May 11, is 6-0 with a 1.90 ERA in 11 starts, striking out 89 and walking 13 in 66 1/3 innings. The 11 starts for the 21-year-

old right-hander will be the fewest for an All-Star and he will become the fifth rookie starter after Dave Stenhouse (1962), Mark Fidrych (1976), Fernando Valenzuela (1981) and Hideo Nomo (1995).

NL manager Torey Lovullo announced last week he was starting Skenes.

AL manager Bruce Bochy of World Series champion Texas said Monday he has Steven Kwan of Cleveland hitting leadoff and playing left field, followed by Baltimore shortstop Gunnar Henderson, New York Yankees right fielder Juan Soto and center fielder Aaron Judge, Houston designated hitter Yordan Alva-

rez, Guardians shortstop José Ramírez, Toronto first baseman Vladimir Guerrero Jr., Orioles catcher Adley Rutschman and Rangers second baseman Marcus Semien.

Ketel Marte bats first and plays second base for the NL, followed by Los Angeles Dodgers designated hitter Shohei Ohtani, Philadelphia shortstop Trea Turner, Phillies first baseman Bryce Harper, Milwaukee catcher William Contreras, Brewers right fielder Christian Yelich, Phillies third baseman Alex Bohm, Dodgers center fielder Teoscar Hernández and San Diego left fielder Jurickson Profar. □